



Preamble

The Contractors State License Board reminds you to exercise your rights and responsibilities when making home improvements. As a California consumer, you have the following rights when working with contractors:

HIRING A CONTRACTOR

- You have the right to hire only licensed contractors and to check the license through the Contractors State License Board at **www.cslb.ca.gov**.
- You have the right to review a contractor's past work and to check references.
- You have the right to get at least three bids from licensed contractors before hiring a contractor.

PROJECT PAYMENTS

- You have the right to make a down payment of no more than 10 percent of the project price or \$1,000, whichever is less.
- You have the right to make payments as work is completed.
- You have the right not to pay cash for home improvement projects.
- You have the right to withhold a final payment until the work agreed to in the contract is completed.

PROJECT PAPERWORK

- You have the right to require that the contract include one project price, which includes labor and materials.
- You have the right to negotiate a clear contract that includes a written payment schedule and completion date.
- You have the right to review the contract and only sign it when you understand the terms.
- You have the right to require your contractor to obtain a building permit for your project.

CONSUMER RESPONSIBILITIES

As a consumer, you have these rights, but you also have the responsibility to properly plan and manage your project and to insist on your rights.



Homeowner's Rights Checklist

GET EDUCATED & KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

- ☐ Read the CSLB Home Improvement Bill of Rights on reverse
- ☐ Go to CSLB's Web site at **www.cslb.ca.gov** and:
 - ☐ Read "What You Should Know Before You Hire a Contractor"
 - ☐ Read "Home Improvement Contracts: Putting the Pieces Together"

HIRING

- ☐ Hire only licensed contractors
- ☐ Ask to see the contractor's CSLB pocket license
- ☐ Get at least three written bids from licensed contractors
- ☐ Verify that all bids are for the same scope of work
- ☐ Check contractor's status with the Contractors State License Board at **www.cslb.ca.gov**
- ☐ Ask for references and follow up by inspecting the contractor's completed work

THE CONTRACT

- ☐ Negotiate a clear and complete written contract
- ☐ Write specific descriptions now to prevent disputes later
- ☐ Verify that your written contract includes:
 - ☐ One price for the work to be done
 - ☐ Specific descriptions of work and materials to be used
 - ☐ Start and completion dates
 - ☐ An agreement that the contractor will obtain building permits
 - ☐ A payment schedule and the legal down payment amount
 - ☐ A "Notice to Owner" regarding lien laws
 - ☐ A notice whether the contractor carries commercial general liability insurance and the carrier
- ☐ Insist that all changes, additions and deletions to the contract are in writing
- ☐ Create a job file and keep the written contract, change orders, payment records and all other project documents in it

PAYMENTS

- ☐ Pay no more than 10 percent of the project price or \$1,000, whichever is less, as a down payment*
**Pay no more than 2% down or \$200 on a swimming pool project*
- ☐ Pay as work is completed according to the contract schedule — don't let payments get ahead of the work
- ☐ Never pay cash

SUBCONTRACTORS AND LIENS

- ☐ Make a list of all subcontractors and check their license status at **www.cslb.ca.gov**
- ☐ Get unconditional lien releases signed by all subcontractors and material suppliers
- ☐ Keep a record of all material deliveries, dates and progress of work